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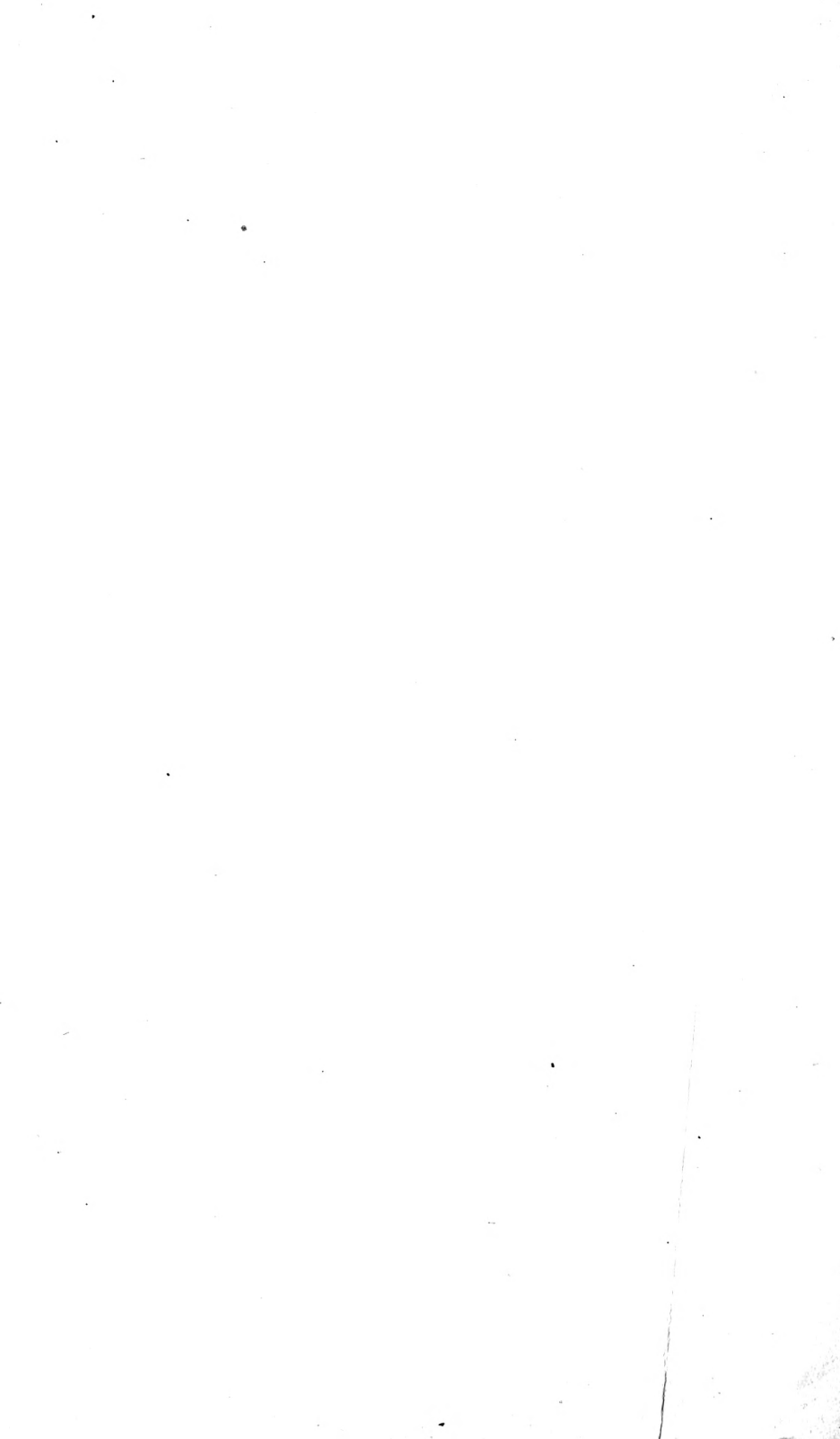
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HEATHER-BELLS,

DRAPIED ON THE GRAVE OF

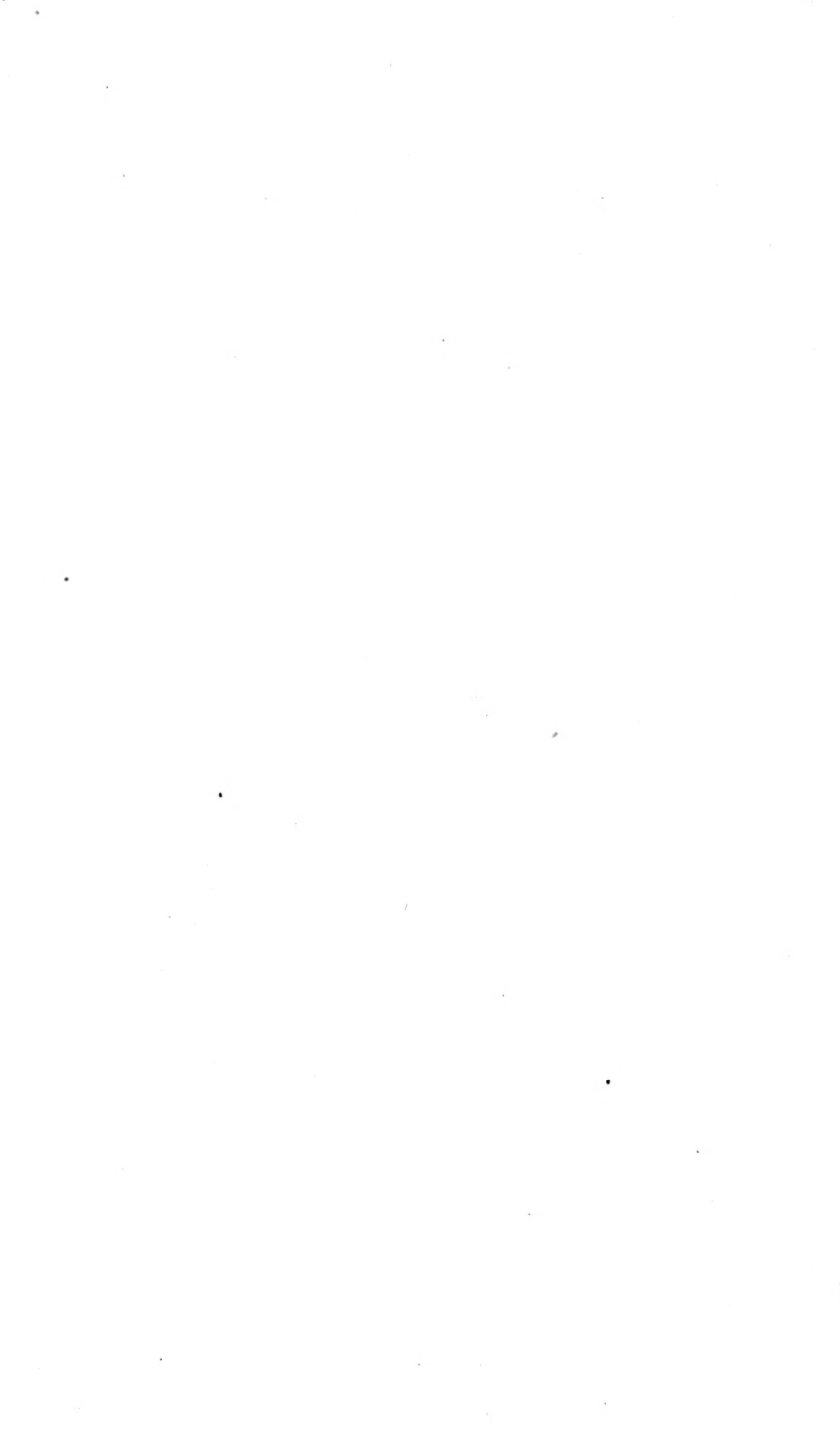


Robert Burns.



Hon. Horatio King
with Compliments of

Gen Ballou
— " —



Robert Burns.

Heather-Bells

DRAPPIT ON HIS GRAVE,

By J. E. RANKIN.

—:O:—
“He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone.”
—:O:—

“We’ll drappit flow’rs on’ east our stane.”

WASHINGTON, D. C.:
WILLIAM BALLANTYNE, PUBLISHER.
1873.

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NOTA BENE.

As the Author has been requested to publish the lines read
at the late Burns Anniversary, in this City, he has
taken occasion to embrace with them three other
memorial poems on the same theme; one of
which was read at a similar festival
two years ago. Nothing can be
fitter, than to

DEDICATE THEM ALL, AS HE DOES,

TO

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Wilson,

at whose beautiful home the late anniversary was held, with
fair faces, noblest eloquence and sweetest song, and
with none of the accompaniments, which sometimes
violate the Christian sentiments of those who at
once lament the faults, admire the trans-
cendent genius, and revere the
memory of

ROBERT BURNS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *January 27, 1873.*





ROBERT BURNS.

A MEMORIAL ODE.

I.

*In mud-bigg'd Ayrshire-cottage born,
Amang woodlan's and heather ;
When ootdoor beasties were forlorn,
In cauld, mid-winter weather ;
When springin' larks nae langer mountit
Aboon the simmer meadows ;
Nor could the floatin' cluds be countit
I' burnies, by their shadows ;
Just as his mountain-daisy glintit
Beneath the beating storm,
On earth, unheraldit, unhintit,
Appeared the Poet's form.
The cottage wa's his faither buildit,
Ane single day, the strainger shieldit ;
Then, by the beatin' tempest crumblit,
Aboot his heid, untimely tumblit :
Mither an' wean, to neebors driven,
Bravin' the snawy airts o'heaven.*

II.

*And, yet, this was the cent'ry's aloe-flow'r,
 Glintin' in cottage, not in mansion;
 Hoardit her sweetness till that hour,
 To giv'e it ane expansion!
 A prince, his sceptred realm to tak'
 In province lang kept waitin';
 A prophet, silence lang to brak'
 An' giv'e man's cause re-statin';
 A seer, a' fause things to pierce,
 An' strip them o' their mantle;
 To haud them wi' a seizure fierce,
 An' slay them by the hantle:
 An', yet, a poet, sent to mark
 An' lo'e ilk simplest beastie;
 Frae cow' rin' mouse, to mountin' lark,
 Poised upward frae her nestie!*

III.

*But, not frae Life's rough work was bought
 For him, the least exemption:
 At his ain task, he painfu' wrought:
 He strugglit, suff'rit, felt, and thought,
 Eschewin' nane, and shrinkin' naught,
 Till Death brought him redemption.*

*Nae thornless road through Life he sought,
 Just where he was, he entered:
 He dealt his blows, where ithers fought,
 There where the battle centered!
 Frae early dawn, ahint the plew,
 Until the sun was settin':
 The mornin' an' the e'enen dew
 His fit right manly wettin'.*

IV.

*Sprung frae a man, who feared his God,
 An' a true-hertit mither:
 They wrung their livin' frae the sod,
 An' dwalt in lo'e thegither.
 They read, they knelt, they sang their
 psalm,
 Their praise by faith indited;
 I'mirk, came down, Gude's light an' calm,
 An' a' their ills were rightit.
 He taught the yunkers what he kenn'd;
 His ain, hard-purchased learnin';
 Seekin', ilk night, at hame to blen',
 The tutor wi' his earnin'.
 When still he was a bairn i' years,
 He gie'd a manly shouter:*

*He teuk man's share o' waes and tears ;
 He teuk Life's warly bother.
 An' when his saunt-like faither died,
 Because he was the auldest,
 I' front, to stem grim poortith's tide
 He stood him, like the bauldest.
 T'was his to tak' the guidman's place,
 An' spread the big ha' Bible ;
 Or, bonnet-aff, to speak the grace
 The lave aroun' the table.*

V.

*A thoughtfu', stoopin' lad he grew,
 As though beneath some burden ;
 A lad o' moods, wha hardly knew
 His life, a bane or guerdon !
 Though now an' then, when sairly prest,
 He spak' in sic het fashion ;
 Some wrang to man or beast redrest,
 Kindlit to burnin' passion.
 A swarthy, well-knit chiel he leuked,
 Wi' black een coal-like burnin' ;
 Wha never slight nor insult brook'd ;
 Nor true man's lo'e was spurnin :*

*Weel-pleased, to please his brither-man
 Nor his ain pride concealit:
 Though unco sharp a faut to scan,
 Still, tender aft to shiel' it.
 Kennin' and lo'ein' weel the guid,
 Wi' herts na proud nor frigid,
 Though paintit mask, he often pu'd
 Frae bigotit and rigid: .
 A chiel to gaze at, when he passed,
 An' when he spak' to hear him;
 Angered, to mak' ane leuk aghast:
 To mak' ane lo'e and fear him:
 Nae weaklin' nursed on Fortune's knee,
 And in her lap saft dandled;
 Nor even when he erred, to be
 By man too rudely handled.
 But, tim'rous things still lo'ed his ca',
 Ilk flow'r he tender fondlit;
 He pluck'd the wee-thing frae it's fa',
 An' it like mither handlit.*

VI.

*A strange compound o' lo'e an' het,
 Still kept within, unuttered:
 A bird, the sky untried as yet,
 Whase wings aft wildly fluttered:*

*To him denied the scholar's leuk,
 To ken the rede o' sages ;
 But partial Nature spread her beuk
 The wider, wi' bright pages :
 A' sights and soun's that came frae her
 To him had halie meänin' ;
 He was her daily worshiper
 Aboon the furrow leanin' ;
 He saw her i' the wimplin' burn,
 An' i' the blue-e'e'd woman :
 Frae mouse and lark had tact to learn
 Su' thin' 'twas a' maist human :
 His nature was sae large aboot,
 An' orb so grandly roundit,
 High thing or low, he speired it oot,
 An' spak it, when he found it.
 For, when, belyve, his tongue he fan',
 In satire grave, or humor,
 There was nae chiel i' a' the lan',
 The waggin' o't, could weel withstan' :
 For sae comes doun the rumor !
 The saunts, he fear'd them not ava,
 But tauld their creature-failin's ;
 His verse was heard i' cot an' ha',
 Noo ringin' oot in accents braw,*

*Then sad wi' puir man's ailin's ;
The very doggies, too, fand tongues,
An' at ilk ither rattlit ;*

Discoursin' wi' inflatit lungs

*On themes that men had battlit ;
The brigs themsels, aboon the Ayr,
Were heard, ane night, disputin' :*

*Were barely kept frae pu' in' hair,
The Ayr, alarm'd down-shootin' !*

*An' then, he strode the warlock warl'
As though its laird an master ;*

*An' ghaistly hizzies set awirl,
Nor risk'd puir Tam's disaster.*

*Discours'd to him, e'en Death himsel'.
That day he met the Doctor :*

*While he preach'd to Auld Nick as well
As though he'd been his proctor.*

*The harvest-gangs wad aften pause,
I' very het o' simmer,*

*To hear his tongue deal ready blaws
Or catch o' wit his glimmer ;*

*He'd stap the blacksmith at his work
Haudin' the lifiit hammer ;*

An' set the loiterers roun' the kirk

At noontide, i' a clamor:

*Like some ta' tree still to the groun'
Its frute profuse doon-shakin',*

*Regardless wha the treasure foun',
Or wha, it hame was takin'.*

VII.

In him, the puir dumb beasties fan'

A judge an' a defender!

Their wrangs to right, his was the han'.

To state, his voice sae tender!

An' when he tauld his ain true lo'e,

The sternies seem'd to listen;

The flowers aroun' him seem'd to know.

An' wad wi' tear-drops glisten:

The very burdies stilled their sangs,

As neath them, he walk'd croonin';

An' seemed to catch his waes and wrangs,

Their notes to his attunin';

Sae that, although his sun went down,

Before he reached twa-score,

His name i' ilka tongue is foun',

His sangs on ilka shore:

"Sweet Afton" glides where waters curl,

An' "Bonnie Doon" rins roun' the warl'!

VIII.

*'Tis true, he aft forgot himsel',
 An' soil'd Gude's robes aroun' him;
 Alas! he kenn'd his weakness well:
 Nor lo'ed the chains that bound him!
 Could he ha'e held his purpose true,
 Nor on fause currents drifted,
 His sky had been serener blue,
 Nor wad its win's sae shifted.
 His nobler uses, had he kenned,
 Or lived man's years allotted,
 There's mony a line i' passion penn'd,
 Ablins, he might have blotted:
 An', when he came at last to see
 Death's waters surgin' roun' him,
 Wi' big ha' Bible on his knee
 Fu' aft his guid-wife foun' him: *
 What passed, Gude kens, in thae last
 hours,
 He in the furnace walkin',
 Between thae high contractin' powers
 Gude an' himsel' there talkin';*

* See Dr. Waddell's new Life of Burns.

*He kenn'd fu' weel the gate to choose,
The gate sae lang forsaken ;
The gate, we a' sae sadly lose :
Ablins, that gate was taken.
But, ah ! we'll plead nae mair his cause ;
We lo'e him still for what he was !
He was but man, man born o' woman,
Had he been mair, he'd na been human.
An' till we see his like agen,
We'll drappit flow'rs, and cast nae stane !*





THE MYRSHIRE PLEUGHMAN.

*The snaw-white daisie on the hill
Still hides her modest head ;
The peasant drì'es his furrow still
Across the mousie's bed.*

*The banks are green on bonnie Doon,
Still flows the gurglin' Ayr ;
The woodlan' warblers are i' tune,
As when they twa were there.*

*The wearie cotter frae the soil
Comes singin' happy hame ;
Catchin' as offset to his toil
His ingle's blinkin' flame.*

*Tossin' his wee-things haigh i' air,
Kissin' his gude-wife's lips,
Settlin' his limbs within his chair,
Thankfu' his bowl he sips.*

*But, where is he those scenes amang,
Wha' scanned wi' Poet's e'e ;
Wha' as he plewed wad croon a sang,
Or as bairns clamb his knee ?*

*Be Dumfries' grasses always green
Aboon his pleughman breast :
An' blessin's on the tender een
That greet aroun' his rest.*





IN DUMFRIES KIRKYARD.

*In Dumfries kirkyard, lies a chiel
Whase e'e lo'e kindlit, loof was leal;
Proud Scotia's sons, they ken fu' weel,
Though sae lang deid,
'Tis Robert Burns, by Gude's ain seal
A Poet made.*

*In Ayrshire, did his mither bear him,
In Ayrshire, did his daddie rear him:
Nor did the great-e'e'd beasties fear him.
Nor nags, at plew:
The silly sheep ran bleatin' near him,
Wham weel they knew.*

*In harvest-fields, he swung the sickle;
O' rural pastimes had fu' mickle:
At ilk man's grief, his een wad trickle
As at his ain:
But, ah! too aft his will was fickle
An' wrought man pain.*

*He wooed the secret charms o' Nature,
 He kenned her beauties, ilka feature ;
 The burd, the mouse, ilk fearfu' creature
 He still befriendit ;
 The plew-crush'd daisie, he maun greet her
 Sae fair, sae endit !*

*How weel he sang the sacred scene
 When cotter trudges hame at e'en,
 An' wi' his wifie, bairns, an' wean
 Sae humbly kneels !
 Sic halie joys the weeks atween
 His household feels.*

*He yieldit, ah ! to stormy passion,
 He madly drank, as was man's fashion,
 He sairly sinn'd, by his confession,
 An' suff'rit sair :
 He sadly needit Gude's compassion :
 Some need it mair.*

*Let daisies weep, larks mount abo'e him,
 Let peasants come, wha read and lo'e him,
 Let a' eschew the fauts that slew him,
 An' laid him there ;
 While Dumfries kirkyard proud shall
 ha'e him,
 Or rin the Ayr !*



ROBIE BURNS.

*Sae lang as Doon's a rinnin' river,
 Sae lang as share the daisy turns :
 Sae lang as mice at pleughmen quiver :
 Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae lang as blue-bells deck the heather,
 Sae lang as baum breathe Scotia's ferns,
 Sae lang as beasties dread could weather :
 Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae lang as Highlan's ha'e their Marys,
 Sae lang as starns ha'e gowden urns,
 Sae lang as lovers tine their dearies,
 Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae long as hame o' nights the cotter
 Wï' achin' banes frae work returns,
 Tossin' i' air, ilk gigglin' trotter ;
 Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae lang as frae his han', the chalice
That's tyrant-mixed, the patriot spurns;
Sae lang as Scots lo'e Bruce an' Wallace;
Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae lang as man forg'ies his brither,
Sae lang's to work his guid he yearns:
Sae lang's the weak maun help ilk ither:
Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*

*Sae lang as Dumfries' sod lies vernal,
Where mony a hert his story learns:
We'll fling the husk, and tak' the kernel:
Our een sal greet for Robie Burns.*





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